

MORNING APPEAL.

Friday.....February 11 1887.

ARTESIAN WELLS.

One of the most sensible articles yet furnished the press on the subject of water for Nevada is that of L. F. J. Wrinkle, of Virginia City. It is herewith appended:

I do not believe that what has been done around Carson can be taken as a fair example of what can be accomplished by sinking artesian wells. The theory of artesian wells is that they cut water seams in stratified rock dipping into the ground. As the Sierra Nevada and other ranges around Carson are in general not stratified, but eruptive rocks, having no continuous seams of any great extent to carry water down into the ground, one can hardly expect to strike any great flow there by sinking artesian wells. The case is different in Southern Nevada, where there are great ranges of stratified rocks, with low valleys and a hot climate. In many places there the chances of getting artesian water are very good, and when got it might be used to raise crops that need a warm climate and pay to raise on comparatively expensive land, such as grapes, tobacco, etc. In California artesian water is not found everywhere in paying quantities. They have at intervals "artesian belts." Nevada should encourage search for such "artesian belts."

Nevada has flowing into the Truckee, Humboldt, Carson and Walker rivers, during high water stage and going to waste in Pyramid, Winnemucca, Humboldt, Carson and Walker lakes, enough water to irrigate 5,000 square miles of land. A part of this flood might be saved by storage. "Experience" thinks this impracticable, except in a few cases. Why should not Nevada investigate those few cases and bring them to notice, so that capital may be induced to utilize them? For example, Walker river runs through Mason Valley, where the farmers have prospered, and where there is plenty of room for more farmers; but already, through the growing season, water is scarce, while each year enough water runs to waste into Walker Lake to irrigate 3,000,000 acres. I am told by the Hon. J. B. Gallagher, residing in Mason Valley, and well-informed on the subject, that up towards the head of Walker river there are two lakes aggregating about twenty square miles in area, whose outlets might be dammed and water stored there during the floods for use in the dry season. Assuming that these lakes were raised five feet by a dam they would impound enough water to irrigate 60,000 acres of land. To definitely ascertain what could be done at these lakes or elsewhere on Walker river would require a preliminary survey, which should not cost more than \$1,500.

In like manner, there are said to be opportunities for storage of water near the sources of the Carson, and everyone knows there is much good land along that river that only needs water. Ditches have been taken from the Humboldt and Truckee, and others projected. As the land in these river valleys has all been surveyed by the General Government and the State of Nevada has the maps, it will be easy to make a map showing the ditches already dug, and lands already irrigated; also what lands might be irrigated by practicable works. Walker River Valley might be examined first. Carson Valley next year, and so on. About \$2,000, rightly used, would in three or four years give a very good idea of the facilities for irrigation in the State.

I know there is a proposition to ask the General Government to do this work. But Congress may say that river and harbor appropriations are in aid of commerce and navigation and concern the whole nation, while this is exclusively a State improvement. Nevada has received grants of over 2,000,000 acres, and to ask the Government to investigate the water problem is like asking it to improve the lands it has already given to this State. Certainly such a request would come with better grace if the State was doing something that way itself.

It is not worth while discussing cost and danger of dams until we know where they should be built. The Franktown dam was built by incompetent persons. Thousands

of dams of the kind needed have been built in India and elsewhere and have lasted for ages. The observations of "Experience" on artesian wells and dams seem to have been confined to the horizon of Carson and Franktown. Perhaps his knowledge of the capabilities of the soils of Nevada is similarly restricted; at any rate, his remarks are at variance with statistics given by Governor Stevenson in his message, which show a considerable export of farm produce from Nevada to California, and with census reports, which show the yield per acre to be greater for the crops raised in Nevada than for like crops in California.

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